



## Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

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# Fire Update

October 6, 2015

*Kamiah, Idaho* – Wetting rains in early and mid-September moderated fire behavior across the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, but did not provide the precipitation needed to be considered season ending events.

**North Fork Ranger District** – Fire personnel continue to monitor fires on the Larkin Complex. Smoke on two of the fires may be visible to visitors. The Minnesaka fire is located in the North Fork drainage and is visible from the 700 road. The Heather fire, located in the Collins Creek drainage, may be visible from the 710 road. District personnel completed a prescribed burn in the Middle Black Timber sale and visitors may encounter fire traffic northwest of Mush Saddle along the 711 road. The district currently does not have any closures in place due to wildfire activity.

**Powell Ranger District** – Fire personnel continue to monitor fires with the Army Mule, located in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, being the most active. It has continued marginal spread with some single tree torching, but no large growth is expected. The Sponge and Airstrip fires, also located in the wilderness, have experienced very little activity, although occasional smoke can be seen from both fires. Smoke can also be seen on the Boulder and Jay Point fires and is mainly due to burning roots in stump holes and ground litter within the fire perimeter. Trails 89 Saturday Ridge, 82 Saturday Creek, and 30 Pouliot are closed.

**Lochsa Ranger District** – Fire personnel continue to monitor fires. Fire activity has been minimal, but visitors may see isolated areas of smoke and torching of trees as temperatures remain warm and fuels continue to dry out. Heavy equipment and fire personnel are working on rehabilitation of fire lines on the Woodrat and Musselshell fires and additional traffic is expected in those areas for the next few weeks. The district currently does not have any closures in place due to wildfire activity.

**Moose Creek Ranger District** – Fire personnel are continuing rehabilitation work on the Slide and Wash fires. Smoke from the Wash fire is still visible. Faller modules are currently working the upper portion of the Falls Point road removing hazardous snags and an excavator is removing debris from the road. The Falls Point road - 443, remains closed for safety. Beginning on Friday, the excavator will move to Fenn and begin work rehabbing the fire line on the Busy trail located behind the ranger station. Selway Falls campground and any area on or adjacent to road 443 are also closed.

**Red River Ranger District** – Smoke is visible from the Crown, Noble, and Little Green fires and fire personnel continue to monitor and conduct rehabilitation on fire lines. Closures in place for public safety due to wildfire activity include road 492 from road 9805 to trail 807, trail 805 is closed from road 9805 to trail 807. All of trail 807 is closed. Pilot Knob road 466 is closed from the junction of road 284 to its ending point. The 9550 and 9553 roads remain closed.

**Salmon River Ranger District** – The portion of the Tepee Springs fire located on the forest is being staffed by two fire engines. Personnel continue to patrol fire lines, addressing areas of concern as they arise. Smoke is still visible as fuels within the perimeter of the fire continue to burn. The Spring Bar Campground is closed.

Unseasonably warm and dry conditions have increased fire danger in the upper elevations to moderate and in the valley regions to high. A few showers are possible Wednesday into Thursday followed by another round of above normal temperatures beginning Friday and continuing through the weekend.

Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Center has dispatched fire personnel to two abandoned campfires and one equipment-caused fire. As visitors and sportsman take advantage of the unseasonable warm weather to recreate on their national forest, fire managers encourage visitors to be cautious with campfires, wood cutting, and other activities and equipment that have the potential to ignite.

**Safety Precautions in Fire Areas:** Recent recension of closures has granted public access to areas affected by fire. Below are safety precautions to keep in mind when entering those areas:

- **Driving** – Please drive slowly with your head lights on. Watch for fire vehicles and personnel, other traffic, and DO NOT stop on the road.
- **Hazardous Trees** – Fire damaged trees can fall unexpectedly. Be aware of your surroundings and avoid areas with snags.
- **Debris** – Watch for rolling rocks, logs, and other debris. Take a saw of some type (handsaw in Wilderness areas) for potentially clearing roads and trails.
- **Watch for Ash Pits** – Ash pits are holes of hot or cold ashes, created by burned trees and stumps. Falling into ash pits can cause burns and/or lower leg injuries.
- **Flooding** – The risk of floods remains significantly higher until burned vegetation can re-grow—up to 5 years after a wildfire.
- **Wilderness Visitors** – If you travel in the vicinity of a fire, be aware of rapid and unpredictable fire spread, rolling debris, falling snags and trees, and limited visibility. Some general guidelines before you leave are:
  - **PREPARE:** Plan your trip with the most current fire information and use trails that avoid the fire. Take a map and compass, and let others know your travel plans. Navigation skills are important in fire areas where trail signs may have burned and are no longer present or readable.
  - **WATCH:** As you travel look out for burned out trees and snags, unstable sections of the trail, rolling rocks and helicopter or airplane water and retardant drops.
  - **CAMP:** Choose a safe place to camp. Look for areas away from the fire, in open areas out of the timber, away from falling/rolling hazards below cliffs and slopes. Insure that campfires are out before leaving the area.

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